

SPARKS OF LIGHT

Pope St. John XXIII National Seminary

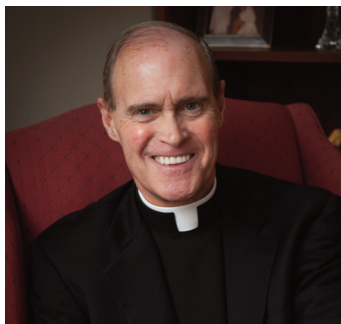
Answering the Call | Founded in 1964

FALL 2023



*Lawn Party Chairpersons, Mary Anne and Dan Lagan
Seminarist Pat Bruen '25, Archdiocese of Detroit*

FROM THE RECTOR



My dear friends,

The tension in our world is escalating each day as people and countries resort to violence as the way to resolve conflicts or to settle scores. As we have witnessed so often, this only leads to more violence and does not resolve anything but makes matters increasingly worse. The world that we live in, whether it recognizes it or not, needs our Savior and His Gospel

in order to realize that true peace comes from accepting Jesus' command to love one another as He loves us. But, as St. Paul says, how can the world know of His Gospel if there are not messengers to bring it? The Lord Jesus has said that *"the harvest is full, but laborers are scarce,"* and that truth has never been more obvious than it is today when people are desperately seeking quick solutions to complex issues. They can't know that the solution is CHRIST, Who is the Way, the Truth, and the Life, simply because they have never encountered HIM. The world can't embrace Jesus' message and live according to it because they have not been able to hear it proclaimed.

That proclamation does not come through words alone but through the pastoral ministry of ordained priests. The priest stands *"in persona Christi,"* representing Jesus in everything that he does. He brings the healing presence of Christ to the bed of one sick in the hospital or at home, he brings the compassion and mercy of Christ through the Sacrament of Reconciliation and Penance, he brings the pledge of Christ to sustain married couples on their journey and help them to manifest their love by the gift of children. And, standing at the Altar and using Christ's words, he brings Jesus' own Body and Blood, Soul and Divinity to feed God's people with the imperishable Food that will guide them on their way to His Kingdom. A French priest, Fr. Henri Lacordaire, O.P., once wrote, *"My God what a life, and it is Yours, O priest of God!"*, and any of us privileged enough to have been called to this life would certainly and resoundingly agree.

Pope St. John XXIII National Seminary exists to form men who can become true disciples of Jesus and bring His message to a waiting world. We take pride in providing an individual formation program that considers a man's history, his life experiences, and his career, and using those criteria to form men *"after the mind and heart of Christ"*. Interestingly, 93% of the men who come to this Seminary complete their formation and become ordained as priests and of that number, 94% remain in active priestly service until their retirement. That would seem to indicate that our mission of forming older men to become priests has been relatively successful and for that, I am grateful to all of you for your prayers, your unfailing generosity, and constant support. I know that we could not fulfill our unique mission of forming older men to serve as priests of Jesus Christ without you.

Fraternally yours in Christ,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Brian R. Kiely". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Very Rev. Brian R. Kiely
Rector

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Very Rev. Brian R. Kiely
Rector and President

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Celebrating A Church Forever Young: Reflections on WYD Lisbon 2023



Photo: Vatican Media

by Gerry Foley '26, Diocese of Brooklyn

Pope Francis, at World Youth Day Lisbon 2023, proclaimed that “Love is at the center” of our lives as Christians. Three PSJS seminarians, Deacon Greg Dougherty '23 and Pat Long '24 (both from Venice, FL), and Deacon Joseph Gonzalez '23 (Washington, DC) were at the center of this year’s worldwide pilgrimage and shared some of their reflections.

Each of the men was invited to attend, either by a pastor or their bishop. The Washington group, numbering 28 (mostly teens and young adults) preceded its WYD experience with a pilgrimage to Santiago Compostela, while the Venice contingent of 52 seminarians and youth first journeyed to Fatima and Santarem, the site of a recurring miracle of the Most Precious Blood.

This was Deacon Greg’s first WYD experience, which was accentuated by his group’s pilgrimages to Santarem and Fatima, where they were able to pray the Stations of the Cross in the Cova da Iria, the site of the apparitions. Deacon Greg also had the privilege of ministering as deacon for Mass at the Shrine’s Chapel of Apparitions with his Bishop as the Main Celebrant. Although COVID forced Deacon Greg to miss many WYD events, he was struck by the “youthful exuberance and the sheer numbers” of pilgrims. While his illness prompted him to reflect on the re-

demptive value of suffering, Deacon Greg also reclaimed from WYD both inspiration in witnessing the transmission of the Faith to our youth and hope from their fervent embrace of its beauty.

Both Pat and Deacon Joe had attended some previous WYD gatherings, from which they drew distinct graces. Deacon Joe’s group, fresh off a pilgrimage to Santiago Compostela

just prior to WYD, was blessed with an invitation to assist in the distribution of Holy Communion at the Mass with Pope Francis. The youth were enthused by the multitudes of Catholics from around the world as they realized they are part of the Universal Church. They also were moved by participating in Adoration with the Pope. Pat’s group shared a similar experience, and were stirred by the faith and enthusiasm of the pilgrims.



Deacon Joe and Deacon Greg

Our seminarians took from their WYD experiences reassurances and hope for the Church’s future despite its many present challenges, summarized by Deacon Joe, “The Church will continue forward with the newest generations.” Love of Christ and for His Church is the center, and indeed the joy, of our lives.

WELCOME NEW SEMINARIANS

*Formation at PSJS coupled with
life experience enriches the Church*



DEACON DANIEL BASSILE

Diocese of Orlando

Class of 2026

Before entering PSJS, I worked as an Elevator Mechanic for 39 years, retiring in July 2023. I have been actively living out my faith for many years as a Catechist, Eucharistic Minister, Sacristan and Reader. By God's mercy, grace and blessing, I was Ordained to the Permanent Diaconate

on October 3, 2020.

While assisting at Mass as a Deacon, I felt a burning in my heart during the Consecration that I was in the wrong spot, that Jesus was inviting me to be the one who He uses to Consecrate the Blessed Sacrament. After a period of time, I sought out a Spiritual Director who shared with me how he came to PSJS. The rest has been an amazing blessing, as I was accepted and am now a Seminarian at PSJS.





LEONARDO ESPINOSA-LOPEZ

Diocese of Raleigh

Class of 2027

When I was a child, I served as an altar boy in my home parish in Colombia-Santander. In this beautiful place, my vocation to the priesthood grew, but it wasn't until 2010 when I made the decision to respond to God's call. At this time, I was 24 years old. Then, after I had finished my philosophy studies there at the seminary, I left and worked as a truck driver for ten years. But along this journey, I realized that something was missing.

During this period of my life, God was asking me, like Peter, "Leo do you love me?" over and over again. He is still asking me "do you love me?" and, like Peter, with joy in my heart I am saying, "Lord, you know everything, you know that I love you." So, in order to continue responding to His love and mercy, God's providence brought me here to this marvelous place "PSJS" to transform my heart and strengthen me so I am able to serve and love Him.



JOSEPH KOLCUN

Diocese of Syracuse

Class of 2027

In February of 2023, after 20 years of residence in Tampa, Florida, I moved to upstate New York where I have friends and family in the Binghamton area. As a Project and Engineering manager, I worked over the past 15 years leading global projects in the Biopharmaceutical industry. I have also spent a year in Belize as a math teacher, assisted with the startup of a Catholic radio station, and spent several years helping Ave Maria University with its "Founders Club" chapters.

I've been truly blessed to travel extensively and have found my "home" in Catholic Churches and adoration chapels across the globe. While in Tampa, I was involved with our church retreats for men, catechism class, enjoyed driving our homebound Mass bus, and assisted with feeding the poor and bringing the Eucharist to the homebound. I continued similar ministries at St. Rose of Lima parish in Syracuse, NY. The good Lord and others have been tapping on my heart for some time regarding a call to the priesthood. I heard many good things about Pope St John XXIII Seminary from multiple sources. PSJS is a great fit for my continued formation and discernment.





BR. ANTHONY MONAHAN, OFM, CAP.

Capuchin Franciscans (Denver)

Class of 2027

I worked in the hospitality industry for approximately 10 years before entering a life with the Capuchin Franciscans in 2008.

I took my Perpetual Vows in 2014 and have had various pastoral

experiences including sacristan duties, working with the homeless shelter, and visiting with the aged and the ill in the Home operated by the Little Sisters of the Poor.

The call from God has been repeated through time, and it was this past spring that I was given the acceptance to move forward. I was granted permission to apply to Pope St. John XXIII because of my later vocation to the Priesthood and to be with my peers in formation.



MAXIMILIAN (MAX) MUENKE

Archdiocese of Boston

Class of 2027

Growing up in Germany my dream was to become a priest. A serious childhood illness with a year-long hospital stay changed this plan. Instead, I became a physician trained in pediatrics and medical genetics and

worked for over three decades at the Children’s Hospital of Philadelphia, the National Institutes of Health, and the American College of Medical Genetics and Genomics. Accompanying families who have a child with a physical and/or intellectual disability has been the most rewarding part of my professional life.

The vocation to the priesthood came again while on a pilgrimage of the Camino de Santiago in Spain, followed by two years of discernment. I am full of gratitude to Cardinal Seán O’Malley, Father Brian Kiely, and Father Eric Cadin who accepted me as a seminarian into Pope St. John XXIII and the Archdiocese of Boston.



“Every believer... must be a Spark of Light”

-Pope St. John XXIII



BAO NGUYEN

Diocese of Venice

Class of 2027

I was born in Vietnam to a Catholic family of nine children. I moved to the United States when I was 12 years old. I have spent most of my time working in Information Technology since graduating from college. I was involved in a small community church as an altar server, Eucharistic minister, and fundraiser whenever the Church needed to help the poor back in my homeland.

I always wanted to become a priest when I was a child, to preach and to bring the Gospel of God to help the poor. I am incredibly grateful that God has opened this door for me. I am thankful that Fr. Kiely, Fr. Miceli, and Fr. Daily accepted me. Lastly, I always appreciate that Bishop Frank J. Dewane has sent me to Pope St. John XXIII to continue my priestly formation.



DEACON JORGE REYES

Archdiocese of Miami

Class of 2025

I am from the Archdiocese of Miami, where I have been a deacon since 2017 and my home parish is Nativity Catholic Church in Hollywood. I am a mechanical engineer by trade and for over 30 years have worked in consulting engineering firms. I have two wonderful, faithful children who are twins and are 27 years old. They are successfully involved in their professional careers, and I am very proud of them.

I believe that God has been “calling” me from a young age however, due to life choices, circumstances, and obstacles, I wasn’t able to pursue it. Later, I heard the call again, and after some time and raising my twins, I now can pursue the call and entered PSJS in 2023. I could only have done this with their support.



“Vocations are everyone’s business”

— Cardinal Seán O’Malley

Seminarian finds Healing Ministry and Deepens His Formation

Deacon Steve Mullaney is a fourth-year seminarian, in formation for the Diocese of Worcester. Over the past two summers, Deacon Steve has witnessed and participated in the healing of many local Catholics.

“Since July 2022, I have been a participant in the Archangel St. Raphael Holy Healing Ministry. I am one of the ministers involved in hands-on healing prayers with individuals at the healing service held at St. Gabriel the Archangel Church in Upton ... I typically also provide the introductory remarks ahead of locutionist Maureen Capistran’s comments. I also began serving in a similar capacity at the Lazarus Shrine for Healing at St. Florence Church in Wakefield this past April. At the August 4th service in Wakefield, Maureen and I each prayed over more than 500 individuals over the course of six hours. I have been told that Jesus has used me as an instrument to provide healing to some of the individuals with whom I have prayed. Several of my fellow seminarians and formators have accompanied me to Upton and Wakefield over the past year.”



PSJS alumnus, Rev. Tom Reilly '00, is the current Rector of the Lazarus Shrine for Healing at St. Florence Church in Wakefield (mentioned above by Steve). The Shrine opened in February

2023 and is instrumental in awakening many healing encounters for parishioners and others throughout New England. Fr. Tom and his team of healers pray with visitors for healing from physical illness, mental health, anxiety, depression, addiction, dependence, insomnia, fear, injury, pain, loss of a loved one, healing from broken relationships and spiritual attacks. When presented the assignment from Cardinal Seán O’Malley, OFM Cap., the Archbishop of Boston, Fr. Tom was told by the



Cardinal: “your mission is to develop a center for healing” in the Archdiocese of Boston. What Fr. Tom has heard so often from visitors in the short time the Shrine has been established is, “I come here because I find a real special peace”, especially during times of Eucharistic Adoration. A near-term goal for Fr. Tom is to build an Adoration Chapel at the

Shrine that will offer adoration – and peace – 24/7.

For more information, to read about healing testimonies, and to view the schedule of the Healing Ministry, view the website of the Lazarus Center for Healing Shrine: www.healingshrine.org.

It is these additional branches of experience that can deepen a seminarian’s formation for priesthood and allow his gifts to blossom in the work of evangelizing the faithful. Join us in prayer for both Steve and Fr. Tom as they continue their work in this special ministry.



God needs priests. Is He calling you?
If you are 30-60, you may be surprised.


First Friday Visits, 5:00 PM
Pope St. John XXIII National Seminary
558 South Ave., Weston, MA

December 1, 2023

Join the Seminary community either **virtually** or **in person**
for prayer & fellowship
Holy Hour and Evening Prayer

In Person: Dinner with the seminarians and a tour of the Seminary

RSVP or receive more information
Msgr. William Fay at 781-899-5500 ext. 134
msgr.fay@psjs.edu
www.psjs.edu

 **POPE ST. JOHN XXIII
NATIONAL SEMINARY**
Answering the Call | Founded in 1964

AROUND THE SEMINARY



Are YOU ready to serve?

Pope St. John XXIII National Seminary will be hosting two Discernment Retreats, one in the fall of 2023 and another in the spring of 2024.

We are inviting men, ages 30 to 60 years old, who are ready to consider formation for priesthood. If you, or a man you know, is interested in attending this retreat, please have them contact Executive Assistant Maureen Walsh for more information. This retreat is a great way to explore your vocation. It is a time to meet the community, see the Seminary, pray together, ask questions, and determine if God is calling you. His Eminence, Seán Cardinal O'Malley, OFM Cap., Archbishop of Boston, will be in attendance and will hold a roundtable discussion as he shares his own discernment and call to priesthood with the participants.

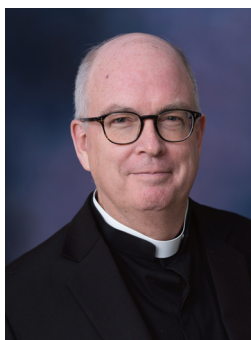
For more information:

Maureen Walsh, Executive Assistant to the Rector; 781-810-1920, mwalsh@psjs.edu

Fall: Early November

Spring: March 15-17, 2024

In Gratitude



In September of 2022, Msgr. Robert Oliver, BH, was appointed Judicial Vicar for the Archdiocese of Boston. Msgr. Oliver joined the Pope St. John XXIII National Seminary Faculty after his return from Rome in 2021. In addition to teaching Theology, he was also a Formation Advisor for seminarians. He continued his role as Formation Advisor until the end of Spring Semester, 2023. He

now devotes his full attention to his work at the Metropolitan Tribunal. It was a pleasure to have him in the house sharing his knowledge, experiences, and advice with seminarians and staff. We wish him God's blessings and success in his new role for the Archdiocese of Boston.



Pope St. John XXIII National Seminary had the honor of hosting the Most Reverend Josif Printezis, the Archbishop of Naxos, Andros, Tinos and Mykonos in Greece as he enjoyed a sabbatical in the Boston area. All of us here at the Seminary were delighted to get to know the Archbishop and have him share in our community during his stay. May he know he is always welcome to

our home here in Weston, MA!

We Remember

Board of Trustee member Jack MacKinnon was called home to the Lord on August 27, 2023.



Jack served for many years on the Pope St. John XXIII National Seminary Board of Trustees and he and his late wife, Rosemary, were beloved members of the PSJS community. Jack's counsel on the Board was very influential in Seminary planning, and it was always wonderful to see Jack and Rosemary at many of our

events. Their friendship was cherished by the community. May both Jack and Rosemary rest in peace as they remain in our prayers.

Save the Date!

32nd Annual Golf Tournament

Fran & Stephen Rowen Memorial

Monday, May 13, 2024

Weston Golf Club • Weston, MA



www.psjs.edu/golf-tournaments

AROUND THE SEMINARY

The Work Continues...

The **Culture of Life Chaplet** has resumed its schedule: click the Chapel Livestream on the PSJS website and pray with the seminarians on Thursdays, 9:30 AM – 10:15 AM www.psj.edu/chapel-livestream ...



The **Lawrence Volunteer Project** has also resumed its schedule: one Wednesday a month the Seminary partners with The Movement Family (TMF) to serve the homeless people of Lawrence, Massachusetts.

The PSJS Podcast, *Never Too Late at Pope St. John XXIII Seminary* produces a new episode the 23rd of every month. Hear vocation stories from the seminarians in the house and consider if you know a man who may be ready to answer his own call to serve God as a priest. Could he see himself at Pope St. John XXIII? Ask, and share these stories with him as he navigates his discernment process. The podcast can be found at www.grexly.com or wherever you get your podcasts.



Seminarians Tom Rashid '26 (Archdiocese of Boston), Paul Landy '26 (Diocese of Beaumont) and Gerry Foley '26 (Diocese of Brooklyn) with Bishop Robert Barron of the Diocese of Winona-Rochester

Expanding the Mind... Harvard University hosted Bishop Robert Barron in September where he presented a talk entitled "Catholic Intellectual Tradition." Bishop Barron told the crowd, which included PSJS seminarians and faculty, that his talk could be summed up in the simple words of one of his heroes, the second-century bishop St. Irenaeus of Lyons, who said: "The glory of God is man fully alive."

AROUND THE SEMINARY

Alumni Days...

Alumni were welcomed back to Pope St. John XXIII National Seminary on October 17-18, 2023 for Alumni Days. Several priests from around the country returned to re-connect with faculty and staff. They also had time to engage with current seminarians and offer experienced guidance and advice to these men in formation. Milestone reunion years were celebrated – 5, 10, 15, 20, 25 and 55 years! Alumni enjoyed their time together, reminiscing and catching up on current experiences.

Rev. Msgr. William P. Fay, Ph.D., presented the keynote speech on a topic that is very significant, one that alumni as well as seminarians are encountering in parishes today. His presentation is entitled "The Responsibility of the Church to Those Experiencing Gender Dysphoria" and is available for viewing on YouTube. The talk was informative and was well-received. We appreciate Msgr. Fay's research and insight on this topic and his willingness to offer guidance to priests and seminarians as they encounter questions in their own parishes. You may view the keynote presentation on our YouTube channel. More information can also be found under the News section on our website at www.psj.edu.



The Harvest is plentiful but the laborers are few!

Can't stop thinking maybe you are being called to be a priest?

Do you feel the Lord tugging at your heart to serve the people of God through the ministerial priesthood of Jesus Christ?

www.psj.edu

UPCOMING 2023-2024 PSJS EVENTS

| | |
|-----------------------|---|
| November 11..... | Veteran's Day |
| December 6..... | Ministry of Lector Bishop Sweeney |
| December 13..... | Last Day of Classes Advent/Christmas Reception |
| December 15-19..... | Exams |
| January 19, 2024..... | March for Life |
| February 7..... | Ministry of Acolyte Cardinal O'Malley |
| May 13..... | PSJS Golf Tournament |
| September 25..... | 43rd Annual Lawn Party |

ANSWERING THE CALL

As Pope St. John XXIII prepares men ages 30-60 to serve the Church as your parish priests, did you know these easy giving options can help support their formation?

- **DONOR ADVISED FUNDS** - Give through your donor advised fund to help form your future priests – your fund sponsor handles disbursements and tax receipts.
- **STOCK** - Make a gift of stock to support Pope St. John XXIII National Seminary's mission of preparing mature men to serve the Church as parish priests.
- **IRA** - If you are 70½ or older, you can transfer a gift to best advance the formation of our future priests directly to the Seminary without incurring tax consequences.
- **WILLS AND BEQUESTS** - Inform us if you have created your Pope St. John XXIII National legacy by remembering us in your will, trust or other estate plans.

Please contact Pope St. John XXIII National Seminary's Advancement Office at 781-810-1923 for more information, or to let us know you'll be making one of these gifts.



SCAN ME



Record-Breaking Year at the Pope St. John XXIII National Seminary 42nd Annual Lawn Party

On Wednesday evening, September 27th, over 300 guests gathered in the Mary Courtyard to celebrate the formation of Catholic priests at Pope St. John XXIII National Seminary - raising record revenue of over \$400,000 to support the formation program.

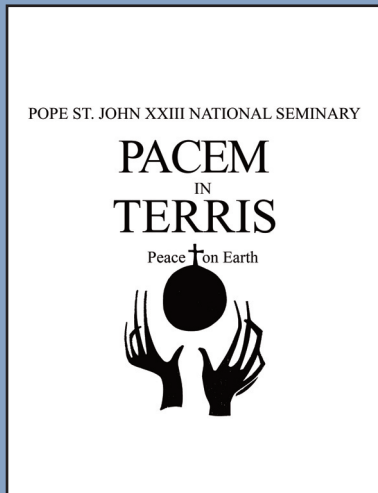
His Eminence Cardinal Seán O'Malley, Archbishop of Boston and Chairman of the Board, hosts the evening every year but this year he was called to Rome. We were honored to have Bishop Mark O'Connell, Vicar General and Moderator of the Curia, host the event in Cardinal Seán's absence. Mary Anne and Dan Lagan of Natick were the Lawn Party Chairpersons. Dan spoke to the guests about why his family supports this unique Seminary and these future priests.

Pat Bruen is a seminarian in formation for the Archdiocese of Detroit and he addressed the attendees with his vocation story. Pat has a technical background and worked for many years in the IT field. He was married for 40 years and raised three children who are all married. Pat is the proud grandfather of 14 with another one on the way. When his wife passed away, leaning on a faith that always sustained him, he began to feel called to the priesthood. He did not think it was possible at first, but Pope Saint John XXIII Seminary gave him the option. Pat's outstanding talk resonated in people's hearts, and you could almost hear a pin drop as we listened in rapt attention.

We gathered under the tent for enjoyable conversation, music, and wonderful food with many alumni, benefactors, and semi-

narians. Pope St. John XXIII National Seminary is grateful to all who donated to support the formation of future priests and making this a record-breaking fundraising year for the Seminary.





Pacem in Terris is the signature encyclical of Pope St. John XXIII issued on April 11, 1963. The encyclical was delivered to the Universal Catholic Church and to all people of good will with a shared message on establishing universal peace in truth, justice, charity, and liberty. It is a solemn recognition of the personal dignity of every human being.

In 2023, in appreciation of the 60th Anniversary of the encyclical, Pope St. John XXIII National Seminary established the *Pacem In Terris* Award. Recipients of the award exemplify the spirit of Pope St. John XXIII with the way in which they live their life as well as their active support of the mission of Pope St. John XXIII National Seminary. Through their actions, they demonstrate generosity, humility, kindness, fidelity, and charity in support of the Seminary's mission to form mature men in service to all people throughout the world.

Presentation of *Pacem in Terris* Award

Long-time supporter Anna-Marie Ferraro was presented with the first *Pacem In Terris* Award at this year's Lawn Party. Throughout the years, Anna-Marie's support of the formation of men for priesthood has deeply touched the men in the program at the Seminary and has impacted the advancement of the Church. Her touch is quiet, loyal, humble and generous. Anna-Marie's contributions to the Church spread wide and are felt throughout the Archdiocese of Boston, at the archdiocesan level, the seminary level, and parish level. We are uplifted and inspired by her quiet and steadfast support that ensures the vibrancy and health of the Catholic Church. Her example is one of humble service. In all of this, she exemplifies the spirit of *Pacem In Terris*. Pope St. John XXIII National Seminary is honored to have Anna-Marie Ferraro be the first recipient of this award.



Sacred Heart of Jesus, Have Mercy on Us.

Condensed version of speech delivered by Pat Bruen '25 at the 42nd Annual Lawn Party

Gratitude is important. He loves me and I am eternally grateful! I try to have an attitude of gratitude when I can. When Jesus appeared to St. Margaret Mary Alacoque in the 1600s, He showed her his Sacred Heart on fire with love for mankind. The purpose of the resulting devotion to the Sacred Heart of Jesus is to focus our hearts on receiving and returning His love with gratitude, gratitude that sadly, is often ignored or treated with contempt.

In fact, it was the Sacred Heart of Jesus that drew me into my priestly vocation. I am a widower. I was married for 40 years. I have three children and 14 grandchildren plus one on the way. I'm learning that there are many similarities between a priestly vocation and the vocation of a married father. Both are vocations, which means God calls us to both. Whether we realize it or not, we are drawn, by God's plan, into our lives. The more we acquiesce to God's plan the happier we are. The more grateful for our vocation, whatever it is or however it feels at the moment, the more we are able to hand it over to the Lord. I am very grateful for both of my vocations.

Here is what happened. Around the time when my wife began hospice care, the image of the Sacred Heart of Jesus began to come to me. I began to notice all of the statues and the paintings of the Sacred Heart of Jesus. It began to haunt me, and I didn't know why.

We could not have a funeral mass because of Covid so I called a friend of mine who is a priest about scheduling a memorial mass in a couple of months and I asked him about this manifestation of the Sacred Heart in my mind and he said, "Well, you know the seminary in Detroit is called Sacred Heart. Maybe you have a vocation." I'm embarrassed to say, I laughed in his face. But the idea began to become ingrained in my heart. I eventually reached out to the vocation's director. There were a number of obstacles to overcome if I were to become a priest...But one by one each obstacle fell out of the way, and it actually happened that I entered the seminary in the fall of 2021.



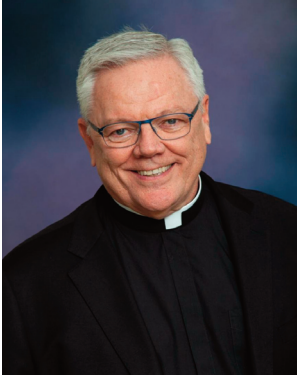
Let me quickly add that I am in this seminary with many men that have similar stories. Unless my friend had told me about John XXIII, I would not have known, but a vocation for a man in his fifties or even early 60s is possible. If you know someone who might be a candidate, I encourage you to talk to them. They likely don't know that possibility. Maybe you can be that seed. I will be grateful for that as I know the Rector will.

If all goes according to plan, I will be ordained a deacon in May, then a priest the following year, the spring of 2025. I will be 68 years old. Every day I ask the Lord, "What are you doing with this old man? And what is your will for me?" I continue to look to the devotion of the Sacred Heart of Jesus for guidance. I pray that God's will be done in all things, and I ask that you pray for me.

I am so grateful to you for supporting this wonderful place. When my wife died, the Lord took a piece of my heart...I realized, the only way to make my heart whole again was to give the rest of it to him so that with the help of His Sacred Heart, I could be healed. That is why I feel so blessed to be able to stand here before you to thank you. To thank you for the men who are studying here today, who would not be here without your help. But I also have a very personal thank you for you. Thank you for helping heal that hole in my heart.

I pray that the Sacred Heart of Jesus will look down on us and give a special blessing to you and to everyone in this exceptional place.

A Reflection on Saints



Rev. Stephen Linehan,
Dean of Men, Director of Pastoral Formation

During the month of No-

vember, the Church turns her thoughts to those who have gone before us marked with the sign of faith. We honor All Saints and All Souls. We pray with them and for them. In many ways those gone before us are always with us, make no mistake about it - "we are surrounded by a cloud of witnesses" (Hebrews 12: 1). They are there with us and for us and we are with them.

On the road we have set out on – here at Pope St. John in particular - we hear the call to holiness. All the faithful have received the universal call to holiness (LG 39). St. Paul urges us to "put on the heart of mercy, kindness, humility, meekness, patience...possess the fruits of the Spirit" (Col. 3: 12. Gal. 5:22). The program of priestly formation calls seminarians to be men of communion. Here we work, study and pray to build up the Church and to lead all souls to Christ. What a blessed venture and road we travel! As we journey that road, listening to that call, we are ever mindful of the admonition of St. Gregory of Nazianzus (+390) "to be, rather than appear to be, a friend of God."

Each of us can have our own patron saints. It may be the one for whom we are named after, the name of the saint we took at Confirmation, our home par-

ish, a society, a club or a sport we enjoy. It's good to know the saints. St. Gregory the Great (+604) shaped much of my priesthood. I studied him in the seminary along with his famous Rule of Life (Regula Pastoralis) on how to be a good priest. I still read and study the extraordinary work of this great pope. His Rule shaped the way the Church trained men to be priests for almost a thousand years. For many years the priesthood sent me to serve sailors and Marines as a Navy Chaplain. Chaplains of all sorts owe much to St. Martin of Tours (+397). The legendary story tells us that as a soldier in the Roman Army, St. Martin cut his great cloak and gave half to a beggar. Later, Christ appeared to him in a dream wearing the cloak. In time, the remnants were stored in a small chapel, and it is from that act the term "chaplain" developed. We remember St. Martin of Tours on November 11, Veterans Day, a day chosen because of his enormous influence as a man of peace and reconciliation.

May this November be a time of grace and communion with All the Saints and All Souls, and especially the saints to whom you are close. May they be a spark of light in your life and those dear to you.

Statue of Blessed Mary and Jesus in Alumni Chapel



POPE ST. JOHN XXIII NATIONAL SEMINARY

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MISSION

Pope St. John XXIII National Seminary is a Roman Catholic professional and graduate theological institution dedicated uniquely to the preparation of seminarians 30 years of age and older responding to a call to priestly ministry.

Our program fosters the human, spiritual, academic and pastoral formation of its seminarians. We especially respect and utilize the life experiences and accomplishments of our mature seminarians, as we prepare them for priestly ministry.

The Seminary program is based on the *Ratio Fundamentalis* of the Holy See, the Program of Priestly Formation Fifth Edition, of the National Conference of Catholic Bishops and the Post-Synodal Exhortation of Pope St. John Paul II, *Pastores Dabo Vobis*.

DIOCESES SERVED

To date, candidates have come to the Seminary from more than 150 dioceses and 25 religious communities. Over 750 alumni serve in dioceses and religious communities throughout the world. Our alumni priests are serving the faithful both nationally and internationally, including dioceses in Australia, Bermuda, Brunei, Canada, Guam, Ireland, Jamaica, Puerto Rico, and South Sudan.



93%

of men finish the formation program
once they have entered Pope St. John
XXIII National Seminary



94%

of our Alumni remain active priests
until retirement